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28 May 1962

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: ONI Participation in the Coordination of IAP 1-62:
"The Soviet Nuclear Weapon Stockpile, 1962-1964"

1. During the coordination of IAP 1-62: "The Soviet Nuclear Weapon Stockpile, 1962-1964", ONI views on the availability of fissionable materials and their allocation to weapon systems underwent a considerable change. When work on this paper first began, the Navy attitude can only be described as schisoid. It was based on a much lower estimate of fissionable materials production than that held by the rest of the community, but at the same time it recognized the requirements for nuclear weapons implicit in the extensive deployment of advanced weapon systems, and particularly naval missiles.

2. In NIE 11-2-62, "The Soviet Atomic Energy Program", cumulative fissionable material production for mid-1962 was estimated at 110,000 kgs. of U-235 and 14,000 kgs. of plutonium equivalent. Navy dissented from these figures, estimating instead 20,000 kgs. of U-235 and 11,500 kgs. of plutonium equivalent. However, the ONI contribution to IAP 1-62 was based not upon any estimate of available materials, but upon the estimated requirements of the Soviet Navy. To meet these requirements in mid-1962, the ONI contribution allocated 18,414 - 27,020 kgs. of U-235 and 4,484 - 5,913 kgs of plutonium equivalent. These allocations for naval weapons alone would require about half of the plutonium equivalent and more than 100 percent of the U-235 estimated by ONI to be available. Recognizing this, ONI emphasized that the -- Navy contribution was "restricted to constructing a model stockpile based on requirements which may or may not apply to the actual Soviet stockpile."

25 YEAR
RE-REVIEW

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DOE review
completed.

NAVY review
completed.

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3. The attitude of the home office was faithfully reflected by the Navy representative during the coordination meetings. On the one hand, he footnoted all references to the majority estimates on fissionable materials availability. On the other, he objected to the types of weapons but not the numbers allocated to support of naval operations in the IAP 1-62 work sheets. However, he proposed no alternatives. The State representative questioned the propriety of ONI's dissenting to the paper without providing alternative allocations based on the Navy's materials estimate, but the Representative declined to provide such figures.

4. This situation obtained until Tuesday, 22 May, when we were informed that ONI was preparing allocations tables. When the USIB considered the paper on the following day, the Navy allocations tables were presented along with other dissents. Because most of the dissents merely repeated positions previously held, they were recorded with little discussion. Hence, the facts that the Navy footnotes allowed a 50 percent margin of error on the U-235 estimate and that the Navy allocations were based on this larger supply of U-235 were not discussed.

5. After the USIB had approved the paper, the margin of error allowed in the ONI footnotes was inconsistent with the Navy position previously stated in NIE 11-2-62. After the USIB meeting Sherman Kent called this to the attention of Admiral Lawrence, who decided that the Navy position on U-235 as stated in NIE 11-2-62 should be modified to incorporate the 50 percent margin of error. The Navy footnotes to IAP 1-62 were amended to show more clearly the actual amounts of materials used in computation of allocations tables.

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6. The change in the Navy position may have been influenced to some extent by Pentagon politics. Both

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the Army and Navy representatives seemed to regard the Navy allocations table as a useful counterweight to the Air Force table. DIA representatives took the position that Navy should submit new tables based on their U-235 estimate as originally stated in NIE 11-2-62. This was seen as a maneuver to weaken the Navy position by one Service representative who feels that DIA is dominated by Air Force.

7. For whatever reason, ONI has moved a step away from its exceedingly low estimate of Soviet U-235 production. The experience of producing some sort of reasonable weapon stockpile from the materials estimated to be available may have influenced the Navy position. In any event, however, the ice has been broken, and it is possible that Navy will move farther in this direction as the illogic of its present position becomes more apparent.


EE Staff, ONI

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